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VALLEY GAY PRESS

GLBT INFORMATION SINCE 1998

THE LEHIGH VALLEY & BERKS COUNTY'S GAY, LESBIAN, BISEXUAL & TRANSGENDER COMMUNITY OPINION & NEWS PAPER

VOL. 12 NO. 5 JUNE 2009

CHECK OUT PA DIVERSITY NETWORK'S WEBSITE AT WWW.PADIVERSITY.ORG

PA Diversity Network ~ Valley Gay Press

GLBT

Community Awards Celebration

June 23 at the Allentown Brew Works

NOMINATE PEOPLE, ORGANIZATIONS AND BUSINESSES FOR AWARDS GET TICKETS AND LEARN ABOUT SPONSORING AT WWW.PADIVERSITY.ORG

PDN announces the second annual GLBT Community Awards Celebration honoring individuals and organizations in both the Greater Lehigh Valley and Berks County, who have served the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender (GLBT) community through activism, advocacy, volunteerism and leadership.. Tuesday evening, June 23, in the Hamilton Room of the Allentown Brew Works, 812 Hamilton Street, Allentown, during a special evening party. Tickets are $20 per person in advance, $25 at the door. Ticket price includes fabulous hors d'oeuvres, pasta bar, soft drinks, cash bar, dessert, and coffee. There will be a silent auction, raffle, prizes and other features, including the PA Diversity Photo Project. This is a non-smoking event. Event begins at 6pm. Awards ceremony begins at 7:30pm. Dessert served at 8:30pm.

PA TO OFFER DOMESTIC PARTNER BENEFITS FOR PARTNERS OF STATE WORKERS!

READ ABOUT IT ON PAGE 11.

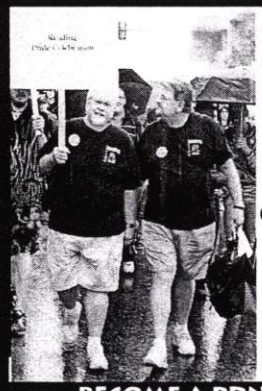
PROGRESS SPURS ACTION

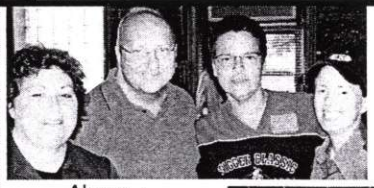
With the passgae of marriage equaity in Iowa, Vermont, Maine, and soon New Hampshire, the recognition of same-sex marriage in the District of Coumbia, the passage of fulll DP benefits in Washington State, the passage of Federal Hate Crimes Legislation in the Congressional House, the passage of marriage through the State House in New York; major GLBT activists have developed the Dallas Principles to help focus work on rights across the Country. See page 11

PRO-EQUAL RIGHTS CANDIDATES WIN ELECTIONS IN ALLENTOWN & STATE JUDGE ELECTIONS

SEE PAGE 7.

LV GAY MEN'S CHORUS CONCERT AT RAINBOW MT JUNE 13





Above - Community members join Mayor Ed Pawloski at May 1 Candida's event

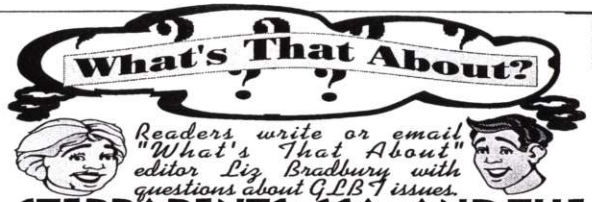
Left- Reading Pride Celebration in the Equality March in Philly on May 3rd.

Right - "Group Lee Gribbons" wins Karaoke Prize at Diamonz event benefiting and organized by LV Gay Men's Chorus, FACT & PA Diversity Network on May 17

Left- PDN Photo Project and speaker event at Reading Area Community College on May 7.

SEE PHOTO ALBUMS OF THESE EVENTS AT PADIVERSITY.ORG

BECOME A PDN MEMBER TO RECEIVE THE VALLEY GAY PRESS IN THE MAIL, SEE PAGE 10.



STEPPARENTS, GSAs AND THE VGP

What's That About received an email this month asking for information on second parent adoption. The person said, "I've heard that now in PA opposite sex stepparents who are seeking a second parent adoption no longer have to have a social worker evaluation. Does this apply to same-sex parents as well?"

Our response was to explain first and foremost that we are not lawyers. When dealing with the complex and very important issues surrounding child custody, you need a good lawyer who is thoroughly familiar with GLBT family rights in PA. If your lawyer says something like, "Well, I've done adoption before, it really shouldn't be that different for gay couples," run, don't walk, out of that office and find someone who knows our families are not the same as straight families when it comes to legal rights.

Regarding the stepparent issue. In states where same-sex couples can marry, those seeking to second parent adopt their own kids, are dealt with in the same way as opposite married couples. If there is no other legal parent to object, the adoption is perfunctory, for the most part. But remember that the state of PA sees same-sex couples as strangers, even if we are legally married in another state. So the process of adoption - even if it is the couple's own kid - is much more complicated. You'll need a good lawyer, or, you could always move away to live in a marriage equality state.

Recently WTA got as call from a student who was looking for groups and activities for GLBT young people. I told this student about Haven, Spectrum, MCCLV, and GLOSS and mentioned the Pride Festivals in both the Lehigh Valley and Reading. I also said I would mail the student a copy of the May Valley Gay Press that would have all sorts of information (including Haven Prom info) about what was going on in the community. Then I asked if there was a GSA in this student's school.

"Yes, I go to the GSA meeting every week, but I've never heard of the Valley Gay Press," said the student.

"Does the faculty facilitator of the GSA ever mention any of the local GLBT activities?"

The student replied, "No" to this, too.

I have to say I was pretty shocked by this. PDN mails a package of Valley Gay Presses to 15 different high school, college, and community GSAs and the GSA this student attended is one of them. It costs about $60 a year to mail VGPs to a single GSA and these GSAs have requested we send them the papers.

What's happening to the VGPs we send to that GSA? For that matter, how about all the rest of them? Why isn't the advisor of this group telling these youth about GLBT community events? Is it because the advisor doesn't understand the importance of getting community information to youth? Is the advisor straight and just doesn't know anything about the community? May be if the advisor read the VGP...

Each month we send the VGP to about 500 PDN members, and send or drop-off papers to 23 drop-off spots where hundreds of people pick it up and read it. The VGP supports all the local not-for-profit GLBT advocacy groups at no cost. It helps the community know about all sorts of events and information, it makes isolated people feel less alone, it encourages for-profit businesses to hold fundraising events for not-for-profits, it helps generate volunteers for all our groups and it also helps avoid event scheduling conflicts. The VGP has been around monthly for more than 10 years.

Recently a local community leader volunteered to make people coming to the events of his organization more aware of the VGP, by handing the papers out to new members. You can help by giving VGPs to your friends and handing it out at events you go to. Your PDN dues help, too. Your dues not only support the VGP, but also the PDN Infoline, the PDN web site (largest GLBT resource web site in the state), Rainbow Families, the PDN Library Project, PDN Speakers on GLBT Issues, PDN Photo Project, and the advocacy work we do for people who need our help.

SCOTTY IN THE CITY ©

By Scott Laubner

GETTING SERIOUS & GMHC

Around Valentine's Day I met and started dating a sweet guy named Dave. For some reason he puts up with me and things have progressed rapidly. . This month we decided to go to the Gay Men's Health Crisis office for their free HIV test. The GMHC is located on 19th Street between 6th and 7th Avenues. Up on the sixth floor we waited for a staff member to take us one at a time into a private room to ask questions. They took Dave first. Even though I was pretty sure I was negative and GMHC does work to try to make this a non threatening experience, it still was a little anxiety producing.

As I waited I filled out the questionnaire. How many times in past three months have you used crack cocaine? Are you a sex worker? Have you had sex with someone who is a sex worker? Eventually the staff worker brought me back to an empty room and asked me more questions. If my test results were positive would my partner get violent? If my test results are positive do I have a support network to help me through it? If my test results are negative do I have a support network to help me through it? They led me into a room that looked like a doctor's office. A man wearing latex gloves gave me a plastic stick and told me to wipe the tip against my top gums and then wipe it along my lower gums.

I was led back into the waiting room. Dave was there. We hugged each other and waited. Dave got his results first and he's negative. Then the staff member told me I'm negative too.

GHMC provides many great services for New York City. Later in the week I saw GMHC at its finest at The New York AIDSWALK . On May 17th, The NYC Gay Men's Chorus along with thousands of other New Yorkers participated in the annual event. hosted by the GMHC. Walkers and supporters of all shapes and sizes descended on Central Park for this important event. Charities and businesses, sororities and fraternities, lovers and families all put huge teams into the field; encouraging each other to strive for the best! Walkers who raise over a thousand dollars were given paper crowns to wear. I saw a group called Episcopalians Respond to AIDS (ERA) holding an outdoor service near the start of the walk. I think they were from a church in Greenwich Village , St.Luke in the Fields.

Dave and I walked and raised money and were able to give back to this important charity.

"SCOTTY IN THE CITY" ALTERNATES MONTHLY WITH "A LITTLE BIT OF HEALING" BY PHIL HEALING

FRANK WHELAN RADIO SHOW

WDIY 88.1 FM announces a new weekly feature segment, "Lore and Legends" with Lehigh Valley historian, Frank Whelan. It will air May 20 and be featured every Wednesday at 5:44 pm during "All Things Considered." WDIY Operations Director, Neil Hever explains that "Lore and Legends" will examine "politics, culture and connections that Lehigh Valley people have made worldwide."

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HOT NEWS

HAVEN YOUTH GROUP

HAVEN MEETINGS : every Wednesday from 7:00 - 9:00PM at the Unitarian Universalist Church, 424 Center Street, Bethlehem. Meetings are open to GLBTAQI youth ages 14 - 20. Adult facilitator volunteers are needed for Wednesday evening meetings. Contact Pete Pellegrino havenyouthgroup@hotmail.com or visit Haven's Web page atwww.uuclvpa.org/haven.

GLOSS EVENTS

The Gay & Lesbian Organized Sports Society (GLOSS) offers indoor & outdoor activities throughout the year. New GLBT and allied members are always welcome regardless of skill level.

The spring/summer schedule is now in effect.

Tennis: Sundays at 3:00pm at the Muhlenberg College courts, 22nd & Turner Sts, Allentown. Volleyball: Thursdays at 7:00pm at Catasauqua Playground, 458 American St., Catasauqua. Bowling: the 2nd Friday of the month, at 8:45pm at the Playdrome in Allentown. Racquetball: every Thursday and Saturday, at 7:00pm at the 24/7 Fitness Club, Allentown.

GLOSS has an email newsletter that will keep you updated on all their events. To sign up for the newsletter go to the website. GLOSS is always looking for people willing to be activity leaders. If your favorite activity is not listed, they will help you organize an event or outing by promoting it in the newsletter and website.

READING PRIDE PRESENTS ROAD TRIP - JUNE 14

"Road Trip" Reading Pride is hitting the road to visit Pride in Washington DC. Bus leaves Reading at 7:00 AM and returns to Reading at 9:00 PM. 8 hours to attend Pride, see the sights or both. Tickets are $35.00 and do not include admission to Pride. For bus trip tickets call (610) 375-8209.

PDN COMMUNITY AWARDS

TO NOMINATE HARD WORKING MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY OR DEDICATED GLBTA COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS FOR AN AWARD, GO TO: WWW.PA DIVERSITY .ORG

RAINBOW FAMILIES PICNIC - JULY 11

PDN's Rainbow Families to have an picnic on July 11th starting at 12 noon. Picnic to be at Louise W. Moore Park located on Country Club Road in Lower Nazareth Township/Bethlehem Township. Park is easily accessible from Rt. 33. All families attending will meet at Pavillion 3 which is located between both of the play areas for the children. The event is open to all GLBT families with kids. It is requested that attendees bring a side dish or a non alcoholic beverage to share. Hotdogs and hamburgers will be provided. Anyone in need of directions or to just RSVP, please contact Earl or Donnie at donniearlucas@msn.com or call 610.759.3922. Please feel free to bring games to play for the children, there is plenty of space! See you there!

BUCKS COUNTY PFLAG

meets the third Thursday of each month at 7:30pm at the Buxmont Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 2040 Street Road, Warrington, PA. Contact Rita, BucksCountyPFLAG@yahoo.com, (215) 598-8005. PFLAG welcomes the participation and support of all who share in, and hope to realize support, equal rights, and advocacy for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, and Questioning people.

LV BEARS

Lehigh Valley Bears social group meets at the Stonewall, 28 N 10th St. in Allentown, at 8 pm on the first Saturday of every month. Meet at the end of the bar under the moosehead. Bears and bear admirers, are welcome. Contact Ira Fine at: iramfine@aol.com or 610-767-7363 for information. Lehigh Valley Bears have a yahoo group :http://groups.yahoo.com/group/lvbears See a Bears definition at PDN's web site.

GLOSS BOWLING

GLOSS Bowling meets on the second Friday of the month. Jerry Makos, the new GLOSS Bowling coordinator, must contact the bowling alley to reserve the correct number of lanes. If you are interested, please contact Jerry at jerry_makos@hotmail.com.

Bowlers meet near the snack bar around 8:45 pm, and usually start to bowl around 9:00 pm, which is when theleague bowlers are finished. New people are welcome and encouraged to attend. There is no competition, so you do not have to be a good bowler. GLOSS is there for fun and camaraderie with other GLBTA people.

GLORA

GLORA-The Gay and Lesbian Organization of Reading and Allentown GLORA@dejazzd.com - http://glora.1colony.com GLORA is a social group that produces a regular newsletter for members.

RAINBOW AA

Rainbow AA meetings Monday and Thursdays, 7:30pm 2nd flr, Church of the Mediator -1620 Turner St. Allentown, AA Hotline:610-882-0558.

CAMP MT. MEADOW

Mountain Meadow is an organization that helps youth from LGBTQ families and their allies succeed in school and daily life. 3 programs; 1) Youth Talk - a year round program that brings youth together for social activities while giving them a sense of connection , 2) Keeping it Real - speakers program which trains youth to promote acceptance and understanding within the community at large, and 3) Camp - a two week overnight camp for kids ages 9-17 that we've offered since 1981.

This year the camp will be held August 9-22 in the Southern New Jersey area. A maximum capacity of 80 kids, but due to the economy it may be a struggle to fill these slots. The program is on sliding scale based on income; it is very affordable and allows many youth to attend from all over the country. 215-772-1107 or www.mountainmeadow.org. Thanks so much for your help.

CENTRAL PA PRIDE DATES

Stonewall Veterans to Lead Central PA PrideFest Unity Parade on July 25th in Harrisburg.

The Parade will be headed by the STONEWALL Veterans Association. The executive committee of the SVA consists exclusively of actual participants of the 1969 Stonewall Rebellion. The SVA will take their traditional place at the beginning of the parade being escorted by Bikers United and Silent Witness of Central PA

The Central Pennsylvania Pride Festival 2009. A full weekend of Pride events from July 24-26, 2009 are sceduled. The theme this year is Your Rights, Our Rights, Human Rights. Pride weekend will begin Friday night with the fourth annual Voices United concert presented by several choruses and choirs. Saturday is the fourth annual Pride Festival Unity Parade and 18th annual Pride Festival.

GENTLEMEN OF BERKS & BEYOND UPCOMING EVENTS

Gentlemen of Berks and Beyond -- GOBAB takes their summer break. Write to gobabevents@yahoo.com with any ideas or trips you think the group might be interested in? Check out other information at: http://www.myspace.com/_gobab

LGBTQA TEEN GROUP SPECTRUM IN READING

The SPECTRUM Meetings offer positive role models, peer support, education and recreation for LGBTQA youth ages 14-18. Meetings Wednesday evenings, 5:30-7:30 on the 2nd floor of Planned Parenthood 48 South 4th St., Reading. Questions? call 610-685-0888 or visit http://www.myspace.com/ LGBTQPP. To become a adult volunteer, contact Amber Brown (SPECTRUM facilitator/Senior Community Health Educator) at 610-376-0137 or abrown@PlanItPa.org.

CPA PRIDE'S GOT TALENT

Friday June 26th, 2009 from 9pm until 12mid at the Brownstone Lounge, 412 Forster St, Harrisburg, PA. Central PA Pride's Got Talent Open Mic Competition. Patrons of the Brownstone Lounge will choose the best performance. The winner will perform their selection at the second stage during the Pride Festival in July. Pre-registration fee: $15, those who register receive a Pride T-Shirt. Register at www.harrisburgpride.org or call 717-801-1830. Deadline: June 14th. Show your pride by purchasing Pride Souvenirs or Pride T-Shirts. A cover will be charged.

READING PFLAG

Meets at 6:30pm on the THIRD TUESDAY of each month, September through May at the First Unitarian Universalist Church of Reading & Berks County, 416 Franklin St. Reading. For information or to confirm scheduled meetings call: 610.858.9278. PFLAG information: call Help Line: 610-967-5219, www.eastern-pa-pflag.org or e-mail:info@eastern-pa-pflag.org.

PFLAG NEWS

PFLAG - Parents, Families & Friends of Lesbians & Gays, www.eastern-pa-pflag.org. e-mail:info@eastern-pa-pflag.org. Meeting locations: LV - 1st Tues., 1st Pres. Church, Allentown. 610-967-5219. Reading - 3rd Tues., Unitarian Universalist Church, Reading. 610-967-5219. Monroe - 3rd. Wed., New Location see web site. 570-620-1234. Pottsville- 3rd Thursday at 6:30PM, Terrence Reiley Community Building, 216 N. 12th Street, Pottsville: 570-624-3151 or e-mail pflagpottsville @hotmail.com.

PFLAG meeting dates for 2009: Allentown: , 6/2, 7/7, 8/4, 9/1, 10/6, 11/3, 12/1 Reading: , (no summer meetings), 9/15, 10/20, 11/17 (no December meeting) Monroe info: Meetings held 1st Wednesdays,monthly at Hughes Library in Stroudsburg 7pm to 9pm in the boardroom. Dates: , 6/3, 7/1, 8/5, 9/2, 10/7, 11/4, 12/2.

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DESIGN
MANAGE
LIVE YOUR DREAM

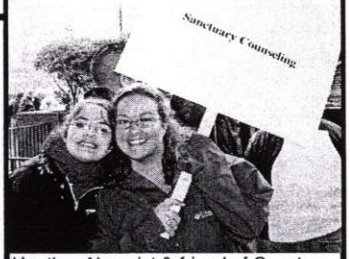
THEATRE U PENNSTATE BERKS

Beginning in the Fall 2009 Penn State Berks will offer a B.A. Degree in Theatre.

For more information visit us on the web at www.bk.psu.edu/theatre or call 610.396.6419 for Prof. House, Coordinator.

GLBT SUPPORT GROUP BERKS COUNTY

LGBTQ Support Group at Sanctuary Counseling in Douglassville. Join this group for an affirming, confidential experience of community and support! Meets the first and third Monday of each month at 6:30PM. Services are free for these groups. Nominal donations for materials/refreshments are appreciated. Sanctuary Counseling provides affirming counseling for the LGBTQ community, and is conveniently located for clients in northern Chester, southeastern Berks, and western Montgomery counties and the Route 422 corridor. Please pre-register. 1st & 3rd Mondays 6:30pm 515 Old Swede Rd. Douglassville, Berks County. 610-385-3155 www.sanctuarycounseling.com VGP Drop-Off spot.



Heather Almquist & friend of Sancturay Counseling at the Equality March in Philly on May 2.

NEW GLBT CHURCH IN READING

New Church for Gay men and Lesbians in Reading. All Souls Ecumenical Church, i in the Reading area. Welcoming and fully inclusive of all God's creation. The church offers the sacrament of marriage to same-sex couples. You can find out more information http://www.allsoulsecumenical.orgor by calling 610-621-1738

READING PRIDE CELEBRATION WILL BE HELD ON JULY 19TH IN CENTRE PARK, READING, PA

SYLVIA BY NICOLE HOLLANDER

SYLVIA comic artist and author Nicole Hollander has graciously agreed to let Valley Gay Press feature Sylvia comics. Grateful thanks to Nicole for this swell opportunity! To see more Sylvia cartoons check the Sylvia website: www.nicolehollander.com.

CHECK OUT PA DIVERSITY'S WEBSITE AT WWW.PADIVERSITY.ORG

SOOZ VIEWS

By Sue Sneeringer

TAKE ME OUT TO THE BALLGAME

Spring is here. Things are green again, or pink or red or purple or yellow or orange. Among the other invigorating occurrences of the season is the bat connecting with the ball, the roar of the crowd, and another season in the sun for my Philadelphia Phillies. I'm happier than a pig in you know what to see the red and white back in action.

Even before I took Ed Deller's line drive to third squarely in the mouth in the fourth grade (wearing that fat lip and bruise like a badge of honor for a week), I've been in love with baseball. There are at least TWO movies in my all-time, gun-to-my-head Top Ten (THE NATURAL and BULL DURHAM, in my opinion, the best baseball movie ever made). I got XM satellite for the car just so I'd be able to get the games no matter where I was. And now, with a team as good as any the franchise has ever gathered and the prospect of getting into the playoffs a pretty good bet from year to year, well, let's just say don't call in October, okay? I EXPECT to be busy watching my guys!

My biggest quibble with baseball and all professional sports in general is the inherent gender bias. Don't get me started here but, yeah, there are girls out there who can go toe to toe with a Chase Utley (isn't he just the cutest?!?) or Jimmy Rollins on any given day. It might be harder to match the physical power and raw talent of a Ryan Howard but I'll bet you there's a girl somewhere who could. But even if she did match his numbers, if any of the girls could play as well or better, there's no room for them anywhere in pro sports. A LEAGUE OF THEIR OWN, another terrific movie about baseball, is as entertaining as a day in June is long. At its heart, however, is a very serious subtext about exclusion, about women as second class citizens. About girls who could play if only someone would let them. I love that about it the most. Every time I hear the pep talk that ends with "...that's why they don't let girls play the game" or weakness is perceived as "playing like a girl" I want to kick in the TV. The inference is insulting on so many levels it would take many columns to address them all.

Which leads, of course, to the homosexual in pro sports. Is it possible that no active player has ever come out in the world of baseball or football or the rest? Yeah, must be, because that's still the truth of it. How we jump to the conclusion that athletic excellence in girls equals homosexuality but forbid any of the boys athletes to be gay is a paradox of gigantic proportions and as much a frustration, I would guess, for the players as for the fans. But I actually think we will deal with the plight of the non-hetero athlete in pro sports before we address the question of gender inequality. In the end it will all come down to $$. Someday one of the stars, a guy who can play circles around everyone else, will have the guts to come out. Our community will hail him as a hero. Many in the straight world will wonder what the big deal is. The rest will have exhibit a typical homophobic response. But we are coming to that day. I think. I hope. I PRAY! Hey, the Phillies won it all in '08. So I believe in miracles!

Until then, Happy Spring, batter up and GO PHILLIES!

TOUCHSTONE THEATRE UPCOMING EVENTS

June 12: Desert Nights: An Evening of Belly Dance- - Featuring Amala Gameela and Abzahrah. (8pm, $10 at the door.)

July 10: Yoga Event -- With Prem Siri Kaur. (8pm, $10 at the door.)

PA DIVERSITY NETWORK YOUTH INITIATIVE

The PA Diversity Network Youth Initiative serves as a financial resource for special projects undertaken by Lehigh Valley and Berks County LGBT youth organizations.

Groups may request up to $200 per program – but must make the request at least 3 weeks prior to the event.. K-12 public or private school groups, religiously affiliated, and independent groups are limited to two grants per year. College groups are limited to one grant per semester.

At the end of the program, the group is required to submit an After Action Report to the PA Diversity Network Youth Initiative.

Eligibility requirements:

Group must be based in Lehigh Valley or Berks County, PA. Group must be youth led and serve populations under age 25.

Projects that will be funded must fit the following criteria:

The project must be youth-led.

Grant request must be filled out by a youth leader.

Project must focus on advancing equality and justice to the LGBT Community. Project must serve an educational and/or advocacy purpose to those outside of the grantee.

How to apply:

Email a one-page description of the project your organization would like funded to: info@padiversity.org

Don't forget to include:

date of the project
project goals and objectives
primary contact for project
who will benefit from the project
what the money will be used for

Selection Committee: Adrian Shanker, Chair, Chris Alvaro, Alanna Berger, Liz Bradbury, Jeff Faller

CIVIL RIGHTS COALITION CALLS CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT ON MARRIAGE "A DIVISIVE DISTRACTION

As marriage equality for same-sex couples gains momentum in other states, advocates across Pennsylvania have condemned state legislators who intend to introduce a constitutional amendment that would define marriage as solely between one man and one woman. The Value All Families Coalition called the proposed amendment "a divisive distraction" from issues that Pennsylvanians care most about.

"Nobody should be fooled by supporters of the proposed amendment who say they just want to protect marriage," said Jake Kaskey, policy and outreach coordinator of Equality Advocates Pennsylvania. "The reality is that these constitutional amendments hurt more than just same-sex couples and could negatively harm countless families and children across Pennsylvania." The Value All Families Coalition is comprised of diverse statewide, regional, and local organizations that support equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender Pennsylvanians, including PA Diversity Network..

PANZEE MAGAZINE CEASES PRODUCTION

From Bolton Winpenny, C.O.O. Panzee Press, LLC, "Over the last two years, we believe Panzee has made a difference in our corner of the world by helping to unite and give support to the LGBT community. It's been a lot of fun, the best part was meeting and working with all of you, along with many other individuals & groups within the LGBT community. Panzee will always remain deep in my heart as an accomplishment in my life of which I am most proud."

CHECK OUT PA DIVERSITY'S WEBSITE AT WWW.PADIVERSITY.ORG

CALENDAR

Am Haskalah, Jewish Reconstructionist Congregation, Services at Allentown JCC at 22nd and Tilghman Streets, http://www.jrf.org/amhaskpa,610-435-3775
ACCO-A Chorus Celebrating Women,
AIDSWALK-see **FACT**
BGMSG - Berk's County Gay Men's Social Group -- singles and couples social events berksgmsg@aol.com
CIVIC and 19th St. Theater, 527 N 19th St, 610-432-8943, <.civictheater,com>
CUUPS --at the UUCLV. uuclv_cuups @yahoogroups.com.
DIGnity -"GLBT-friendly ministry for Catholics and their friends"- meets at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, 1900 E. Pennsylvania Avenue, Allentown 2nd and 4th Sundays at 6:00 pm.DignityLHV.blogspot.comDignitylehighvalley @yahoo.com
Enigma Players -- qacres@prolog.net
FACT- Fighting AIDS Continuously Together 610.820.5519
Gay MatterMagazine --
GLEE at Air Products
GLORA- Gay and Lesbian Organization of Reading and Allentown www.glora.1colony.com, glora@dejazzed.com
GLOSS - Gay and Lesbian Organized Sports Society, www.gloss.org Info@gloss.org
GLOW- at PPL
GOBAB -Gentlemen of Berks and Beyond http://www.myspace.com/_gobab http://groups.yahoo.com/groups/gentlemen_of_berks PO box 13592, Reading, PA 19612, 610-670-4483,
HAVEN GLBT Youth Group of the UUCLV - call:610-868-2153, email: havenyouthgroup@hotmail.com
Integrity- Lesbian & Gay Episcopalians Family & Friends meets quarterly. 610-758-8642 gamba.guy@verizon.net"
Infoline - Greater LV GLBT Infoline: 610-HELP123 (435-7123) M-F 6pm -9pm Office: 610-432-5449info@padiversity.org
INTERWEAVE -- GLBTAI group at the UUCLV. 3rd Sundays.. Interweave_UUCLV@yahoogroups..com. www.uuclvpa.org 610-866-7652.
Kutztown Univ GLBT Radio show "Making Waves," w/ Jason Lincoln Tuesdays 4pm -6pm in town: 88.3 FM, 1670 AM. InEeastern Berks: Serv Elec Cable 24 or Hometown Utilicom: 41. Streaming on-line everywhere at http://kur.kutztown.edu
LVGMC -Lehigh Valley Gay Men's Chorus, email:info@lvmgc.org,<www.lvgmc.org> 1-800-348-2813, rehearsals:Tues.-Wesley United Methodist Church, 2540 Center St., Bethlehem
Lehigh Valley Transsexual Coalition- 610-610-997-0976, humanrights4all@aol.com, 610-814-0530 JamesHalleman@aol.com
LV Transmen - 610-814-0530 JamesHalleman@aol.com
MCCLV - Metropolitian Community Church, Lehigh Valley, 930 N 4th St., Allentown Services: 10:30am info@mmclv.org , http://www.mcclv.org 610-709-8800
Muhlenberg GSA Muhlenberg College Organization 610.821.3244
NCC- Northampton Community College GLB Student Union, 610.861.5541(#1386) or 610-767-0296
19th St & Civic Theatre - 610.432.8943
Out There- Students at Cedar Crest College
PA-Diversity Network- 610-432-5449 www.padiversity.org PO Box 22902 Lehigh Valley, PA 18002

JUNE 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 RAA SC	2 LV PFLAG LVGMC CIVIC	3 HAVEN SPECTRUM FW-WDIY	4 RAA GLOSS V-Ball GLOSS RAC	5	6 GLOSS RAC GLORA WDIY GLORA BEARS
7 MCC UUCLV	8 RAA 15	9 LVGMC	10 FW-WDIY Touchstone SPECTRUM HAVEN	11 RAA Muhlenberg Theatre GLOSS V-Ball GLOSS RAC	12 Touchstone	13 GLOSS RAC LVGMC Concer WDIY REN
14 MCC Reading Pride GLORA SC Muhlenberg Theatre	15 RAA	16 LVGMC R PFLAG	17 M PFLAG FW-WDIY SPECTRUM HAVEN	18 RAA Muhlenberg Theatre GLOSS V-Ball P PFLAG GLOSS RAC	19	20 WDIY GLOSS RAC
21 MCC Rev Berry UUCLV	22 RAA	23 PDN Awards Night	24 Muhlenberg Theatre FW-WDIY HAVEN SPECTRUM	25 GLOSS GLOSS V-Ball GLOSS RAC	26 Central Pride Show	27 WDIY GLOSS RAC
28 MCC UUCLV	29 RAA	30 LVGMC				

JULY 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 HAVEN SPECTRUM FW-WDIY	2 RAA GLOSS V-Ball GLOSS RAC	3	4 WDIY GLOSS RAC BEARS
5 MCC UUCLV GLOSS WDIY	6 RAA SC	7 LVGMC LV PFLAG	8 SPECTRUM 19th Street Muhlenberg Theatre FW-WDIY HAVEN	9 RAA GLOSS V-Ball GLOSS RAC	10	11 Rainbow Fam Picnic
12 MCC GLORA	13 RAA	14 LVGMC	15 FW-WDIY HAVEN SPECTRUM M PFLAG	16 RAA Muhlenberg Theatre P PFLAG GLOSS RAC	17	18 WDIY GLOSS Tennis GLOSS RAC
19 Reading Pride Celebration	20 RAA SC	21 R PFLAG LVGMC	22 FW-WDIY HAVEN SPECTRUM	23 RAA GLOSS V-Ball GLOSS RAC	24	25 WDIY GLOSS RAC Central Pride Mixer GLOSS Tenni
26 WDIY UUCLV MCC GLOSS CUUPS	27 Muhlenberg Theatre RAA	28 LVGMC	29 FW-WDIY HAVEN SPECTRUM	30 RAA GLOSS V-Ball GLOSS RAC MCC	31	

AUGUST 2009

GLOSS Tennis

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 BEARS GLOSS RAC GLOSS Tennis
2 MCC GLOSS UUCLV	3 RAA	4 LVGMC	5 HAVEN FW-WDIY SPECTRUM	6 GLOSS V-Ball RAA GLOSS RAC	7 Rainbow Players	8 REN WDIY GLOSS RAC GLOSS Tennis
9 GLOSS MCC Interweave UUCLV	10 RAA SC 17	11 LVGMC R PFLAG MCC	12 HAVEN 19th St SPECTRUM FW-WDIY	13 RAA P PFLAG GLOSS V-Ball GLOSS RAC	14	15 GLOSS RAC WDIY GLOSS Tennis
16 LV Pride in Park	17 RAA	18 LVGMC	19 HAVEN SPECTRUM FW-WDIY	20 RAA GLOSS V-Ball GLOSS RAC	21	22 GLOSS Tennis WDIY GLOSS RAC
23 UUCLV GLOSS MCC 30	24 RAA SC 31	25 LV PFLAG LVGMC	26 HAVEN SPECTRUM FW-WDIY	27 GLOSS V-Ball RAA GLOSS RAC	28	29 WDIY GLOSS RAC GLOSS Tennis

PFLAG - **LV** Parents Families & Friends of Lesbians and Gays, 1st Tues. 1st Pres. Church Allentown 610.967.5219 www.eastern-pa-pflag.org
Pride - Pride of the Greater Lehigh Valley, (Pride Festival) 610.770.6200, email: <info@prideglv.org>, <www.pridelv.org>
Progressive Students Alliance - www.lehigh.edu/~inpstua/lvpsa/whatpsa.htm
Quakers-LV Friends Meeting-Rt 512 N of Rte 22 Bethlehem, Worship 9:30am. 610-691-3411.
RAA- Rainbow AA meetings Monday & Thursdays, 7:30p. 2nd flr Church of the Mediator -1620 Turner St. Allentown, AA Hotline: 610-882-0558.
Rainbow Families - donniearlucas@msn.com
Ren- Renaissance Transgender Assoc., Meets at MCCLV renlv.org
Reading P-FLAG- 610-967-5219
Reading Pride - Festival in Reading www.readingpridecelebration. org
SC Sanctuary Counseling G:BT Support Group 1st & 3rd Mondays 6:30pm 515 Old Swede Rd. Douglassville, Berks County 610-385-3155 www.sanctuarycounseling.com
Safe Space- At Lehigh U. 610.758.5973
Spectrum -- LGBTQA Teen Group, Planned Parenthood, 48 South 4th Street, Reading PA 610-685-0888
UUCLV - Unitarian Universalist Church LV, 424 Center St., Bethlehem, 18018 610.866.7652.
VGP - Valley Gay Press, 610.432.5449, VGP@padiversity.org VGP PO Box 22902 Lehigh Valley PA 18002 www.padiversity.org
Wachovia-GALEA- Gay and Lesbian Employee Association. Contact GALEA@Wachovia.com

SPECIAL UPCOMING EVENTS:

RAINBOW AA - MON & THURS
SANCTUARY COUNSELING-
1ST & 3RD MONDAY
LVGMC REHEARSALS - TUES
LV PFLAG - 1ST TUESDAY
READING - PFLAG 3RD TUES
ALLENTOWN PFLAG - 1ST TUES
LV HAVEN - WEDS
READING SPECTRUM - WEDS
MONROE PFLAG - 3RD WEDS
JAN,MAR,JUN,SEPT,DEC ONLY
FRANK WHELAN WDIY - WEDS
POTTSVILLE PFLAG - 3RD THURS
BUCKS CO PFLAG - 3RD THUR
MCCLV 20'-30'S -LAST THURS
GLOSS RAC-BALL-THURS & SAT
GLOSS VOLLEYBALL - THUR
GLOSS BOWLING -2ND FRI
MCCLV POTLUCK- LAST SUN
MCCLV WEIGHT LOSS- SUNS
LV BEARS - 1ST SAT
RENAISSANCE -2ND SAT
INTERWEAVE - 3RD SUNDAY
GLOSS TENNIS -SUNS

JUN 2 - CIVIC THEATRE
JUN 10 - TOUCHSTONE
JUN 10-28 - MUH THEATRE
JUN 12 - TOUCHSTONE
JUN 13 - LVGMC CONCERT
JUN 14 -READING PRIDE TO DC
JUN 14 - MCCLV RAFTING
JUN 14 - MUHLENBERG THEATRE
JUN 21 -REV BERRY @ MCCLV
JUN 23 - PDN AWARDS EVENT
JUN 26 - CPA PRIDE SHOW
JULY 8-26 - MUH THEATRE
JUL 11 - RAINBOW FAMS PICNIC
JUL 19 - READING PRIDE
JULY 25-CENTRAL PA PRIDE
AUG 7-8 - RAINBOW PLAYERS
AUG 16 - LV PRIDE
SEPT 13 - FACT SUMMER GAMES
OCT 4 - AIDS WALK

Outreach to the LGBT Community

Partnership for a TobaccoFree NORTHEAST PA

when you're ready to quit
we're here to make your journey easier

Free tobacco treatment services, including:

- Counseling
- Nicotine Replacement Therapy
- PA Free Quitline - 1-800-QUIT.NOW
- For free local treatment visit MakeItYourLast.com or call 1-866-974-QUIT (7848)

pennsylvania DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Partnership for a TobaccoFree Northeast PA does not discriminate with regard to race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry or place of birth, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, handicap or disability.

ELECTION RESULTS OF PRO-GLBT CANDIDATES IN ALLENTOWN

Superior Court: vote for three (state-wide)
Anne Lazurus (#4), won
John Younge (#5) lost by less than 200 votes
Commonwealth Court: vote for two (state-wide)
Stephen Pollock (#11). (won)
Linda Judson (#8) (lost by less than 120 votes)
Allentown Mayor: Ed Pawlowski -- major win
Allentown City Council: (Vote for Four)
Michael D'Amore - won!, Mike Schlossberg- won!, Raymond O'Connell- won!, Julio Guridy - won!
Allentown School Board:
Andrew Weiss - won
District Justice Races:
Patty Engler - won
Karen Devine - won
Gail Hoover - lost - However the winner was Walter Felton Jr. member of the Allentown Human Relations Commission, which supports equal rights for all people.

RANTS & RAVES BY STEPHEN T. LIBBY

THE SUMMER MOVIE SCENE. I do not consider myself a comic book geek or a trekker but I liked Wolverine very much and LOVED Star Trek. (For the record, Gary felt just the opposite-natch) Also looking forward to Terminator: Salvation with Christian Bale, The Hangover with Bradley Cooper, Transformers 2 with Shia LaBeouf & Megan Fox, Angels & Demons with Tom Hanks, UP with hottie Ed Asner, The Proposal with Sandra Bullock & Ryan Reynolds, Land of the Lost with Will Ferrall (but no hot Will-grrr), G.I.Joe:The Rise of Cobra (I'm not touching that) with Channing Tatum, Bruno with Borat...I mean Sacha Baron Cohen, Harry Potter & the Half Blood Prince with Daniel Radcliffe and a few others I'm sure I've overlooked.

Summer movies should be like any other day in my life; full of explosions, special effects and adult humor (my relationship with Gary, our friend Carol and lots of effbombs and a few seawards). That said, I am also looking forward to summer's surest bet. Based on box office from the last two summers, The Devil Wears Prada and Mamma Mia's Meryl Streep is the new Will Smith. I know...take a minute to digest that statement. But, it's true. And no one seems more surprised by this than La Streep herself (although Jade Pinkett-Smith would be fairly surprised).

Julie & Julia looks to be an entertaining romp about Julie Powell's attempt to create 524 of Julia Child's recipes in 365 days in a tiny apartment kitchen. Will Julie be able to do it? Will she only be able to pull off 523 recipes? What if she has to take a sick day? What if Christmas falls on a Sunday? Does Julie have to take the following Monday off? What if Julia's spy past catches up to her? How the hell does Stanley Tucci manage to get into every Meryl Streep film? Don't tell me this isn't a nail-biter! Hey, don't forget June 27th is the 40th anniversary of the Stonewall riots in NYC. Tuesday, June 23rd is PA Diversity Network's Awards Celebration at Brew Works and Sunday, June 28th is the Pride March in NYC. Don't miss it and all the other Pride festivals this summer!!!!

PLANET Parenthood

donniearlucas@msn.com

by Earl and Donnie Snyder

FAMILY FUN IN THE SUMMER

PDN's Lehigh Valley Rainbow Families will be having their annual picnic on Saturday July 11 at Louise Moore Park in Palmer Twp in Pavilion 3 from 12pm until whenever. All GLBTA families and their friends are invited to attend. We will be providing hamburgers and hotdogs and it is requested that all bring a side dish, snack, dessert or drink to share. Outdoor games are encouraged. There will be plenty of food, fun, and great people. Thanks in advance to PDN for sponsoring this wonderful event. Feel free to email us at donniearlucas@msn.comfor more information.

Rumor has it that MCCLV will have a vacation bible school for kids. Last year's program was wonderful. There were only a few children involved last year, but expect more this year. The number of children of GLBTA families attending MCCLV on a regular basis has increased dramatically, especially since they have been at their new location. Although this is really only for the kids, it does give parents a short break. For more information on any children's program at MCCLV including Sunday school, summer bible school, or any other events please check out their website at www.mcclv.org. Events are posted regularly.

Another fun time to be had this summer will be the unofficial Gay Day at Knoebel's Amusement park. Last year Rainbow Families had a small contingent of local families attend the park for a day of gaiety and fun. There were families galore. There were gay people everywhere. And we all took over the Whip ride at 4pm. Parking is free, ride ticket prices are reasonable, and many rides are suitable for young children. We will keep you posted regarding this upcoming annual event when more information is released.

Sunday August 16, Pride of the Greater Lehigh Valley will be holding their annual Pride in the Park festival at Cedar Beach in Allentown beginning at noon. Although as a whole, the festival is more grown up in nature, kids will have a good time. Besides the children's area, there will be plenty of food, music, and outdoor space for family fun.

These few upcoming events are quite enough to keep our family occupied between work, family functions, and other obligations of both parents and child, and represent some of what the gay community has to offer.

We hope to see some of you there. The more the merrier.

Some of the UPCOMING Events that PA Diversity will Host or Participate in or Donate to:

June 23-- PDN awards night at Allentown Brew Works
July 19 -- Reading Pride
August 8 -- Rainbow Players One Act Plays
August 16 - Pride in the Park (GLV Pride)
<u>In Planning:</u>
BINGO in the Fall
PDN Community Auction in late sunner

MCCLV MOVIE NIGHT

MCCLV hosts a movie the last Friday of every month at the church, . All are welcome. For more information, contact Steve at lehighgardener@rcn.com.

Presents

CALL GIRL

Written by Carol Mullen

Musical Interlude

POSTCARDS FROM A DEAD DOG

Written by F.J. Hartlund

Friday, August 14th - 8pm
Saturday, August 15th -2pm
(50% of Matinee Proceeds to Benefit PA DIVERSITY NETWORKS YOUTH INITIATIVE)
Tickets: $15 at door ($8 for students with ID)
930 North 4th St/ 1st Floor/Allentown
for info 718-664-3713

All Comedies!!!

GREATER LEHIGH VALLEY PRIDE IN THE PARK 2009 WILL BE HELD IN ALLENTOWN SUNDAY, AUGUST 16 FROM 12 - 6 AT CEDAR BEACH PARK

FACT SUMMER GAMES, AIDS WALK, SNOW BALL

The FACT Summer Games 2009, will be here before you know it! The Summer Games will be held on Sunday, September 13, 2009 at Rainbow Mountain Resort in the Pocono's! Last year the event raised over $15000.00. This year's event promises to be one of our best as the opportunity for more teams will be available as well as, a an expanded program and opportunities for fun. If you and your friends would like to form a team and compete or if you have a team and need a business to sponsor your group, contact FACT at 610-820-5519 and let us know how we can help you! Watch your mail for additional information regarding the Summer Games. Announcements will be sent out in late July 2009.

AIDS Walk 2009, will be held in Bethlehem on October 4, beginning in the Bethlehem Rose Garden on 8th Avenue between West Broad Street and Union Blvd.

Snowball 2009 will be held in December 2009.

REV. WILSON AT MCC FOR NFTMD

MCCLV is pleased to announce that the Moderator of Metropolitan Community Churches, Rev. Elder Nancy Wilson, will be with MCCLV for its 10th Anniversary Celebration of Freedom to Marry Day on February 13 and 14, 2010. Rev. Elder Wilson's biography is available at www.fishcantfly.com/RevWilsonPage.html and Wilson's writings are available at www.moderatorscorner.mccchurch.org.

CHECK OUT PA DIVERSITY'S WEBSITE AT WWW.PADIVERSITY.ORG

CHECK OUT PA DIVERSITY'S WEBSITE AT WWW.PADIVERSITY.ORG

FAITH PAGES by Adrian Shanker

Few people would be willing to listen to a connection between BDSM (Bondage, Discipline, Domination/Submission, Sado-Masochism) and Religion. Though it might be unpopular to be viewed as a supporter or defender of BDSM, in actual fact, BDSM has a great deal in common with religion, especially Christianity. When observing the rituals present in both, one can see the clear connection.

BDSM is an umbrella acronym encompassing numerous sexualities. BDSM scholar Jay Wiseman suggests that "[BDSM] relationships are ultimately relationships of equals" because of the detailed negotiation, pre-planning-and safety words that are built into the scene in order to protect consent for all partners, even once the scene is underway.

Romans 3:23 states "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." As a result of this and similar examples elsewhere in the Bible, there has been a growing movement of Christian BDSM practitioners. A Christian BDSM website lists four reasons why Christians can and should enjoy the BDSM lifestyle. #1. "You need to be saved." #2. Realize that "You cannot save yourself." #3. Understand that "Jesus has provided you salvation." And finally, #4. one must "Ask Jesus for salvation." This sounds very familiar to master-slave BDSM relationships. Ritual pain doesn't always include intercourse, many participants "get off" on the subversion of the power binary (EG: heterosexual woman on top of heterosexual man). Ronald Boer asserts that "God is the ultimate top."

Julienne Buenting comments on this from a queer "God as daddy" perspective. By queering the dominant notions of God, one can take the dom/sub relationships of Christian BDSMers and turn them from a patriarchal practice into a queer one.

Jeremy Carrette argues: "The desire to die for Christ in the literature of the martyrdom, or the bodily denial of flesh in any form of religious ascetisms, exists within a different level of experience from the general practices of submission and domination in the [gay] bath houses of San Francisco." In short, Carrette is suggesting that BDSM is not a mirror image of Christianity but is "socially constructed through religious discourse." The religious discourses of suffering include the dominance of God, the master-slave relationship between humans and God and between women and men, and the biblical concept that all are sinners. The connections are too great to ignore, from the master-slave relationship, to the dominance of God and the Submission of humanity; from the discipline of Catholic school to the asceticism of the priesthood. The sexual and power fantasies of BDSM practitioners are derived directly from a cultural framework, which is largely centered on Christian sacramental theology.

It's not surprising that sexual fantasies about the confession booth (Forgive me father, for I have sinned) are widely held. And not much more of a surprise that many dungeons come complete with a crucifix. What better way to subvert the dominant paradigm than to take the power structure, which is Christianity, and place its most central symbol, the Cross, symbolizing the pain, suffering, and sacrifice of Jesus, in a BDSM dungeon, juxtaposed with a leather rack and across the room from a swing equipped with bondage chains? The subversion of the power of Christianity by the BDSM community is as significant as the parallels between BDSM practitioners and the discourses of Christianity.

Wiseman, Jay. SM 101: A Realistic Introduction (Greenery Press: San Fransico, CA) 1996. Page 5. http://www.christiansandbdsm.com

Carrette, Jeremy R. "Intense Exchange: Sadomasochism, Theology, and the Politics of Late Capitalism." Theology and Sexuality 11, no. 2 (2005): 15.

REV BERRY AT MCCLV

MCCLV is pleased to announce that Evangelist Rev. Delores Berry will be preaching the Word at MCCLV on Sunday, June 21 at the 10:30 AM worship service. You can read more information about Rev. Berry's ministry at www.revdeloresberry.com.

AUDITIONS FOR ABE LINCOLN IN ILLINOIS

Auditions for the first show of CivicTheatre of Allentown's 2009-2010 mainstage season, Abe Lincoln in Illinois, will be held onTuesday, June 2nd at 7pm.

VALLEY GAY PRESS

web site: www.padiversity.org

Publisher, Managing Editor -- Liz Bradbury
Publisher, Editor -- Patricia Sullivan
Columnists: Liz Bradbury, Patricia Sullivan, Donnie Snyder, Earl Snyder, Stephen Libby, Scott Laubner, Sue Sneeringer, Adrian Shanker, Phil Healing, A'JA Lyons and others

Valley Gay Press - The Lehigh Valley and Berks County's Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual & Transgender Community Opinion and Newspaper (VGP) operates as part of **Pennsylvania Diversity Network**. VGP owns the copyright to its articles and columns. No part may be reproduced without written permission of the Publisher. VGP offers free copies for direct mail and hand-out distribution to Lehigh Valley area not-for-profit organizations and businesses. The editorial columns and political cartoons that appear in the Valley Gay Press express the opinions of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinion or attitude of this publication. VGP makes no indication of the sexual orientation or gender identity of persons, organizations, or businesses mentioned in any issue.

Organizations that have VGPs for hand-out distribution:
Metropolitan Community Church LV
930 N. Street, Allentown 610-709-8800
PFLAG Allentown, Reading and Pottsville -- see meeting schedule
Pride House at Muhlenberg College, Allentown
19th Street Theater -- 527 N 19th St. Allentown
Lehigh Valley Unitarian Universalist Church (UUCLV) -- 424 Center St., Bethlehem
Haven GLBTA Youth Group at UUCLV
10 Libraries in Berks County, Allentown Library
Planned Parenthood NEPA 48 S. 4th St. Reading
Easy Does It Clubhouse (Berks County), Reading Community Theatre -
11th & Buttonwood Sts Reading
Allen HS GSA , SPECTRUM GLOSS, Kutztown Univ GLBT Center
Reading Area Community College Library

Businesses that have VGPs for hand-out distribution:
Diamonz Nightclub -- 1913 W. Broad St., Bethlehem
Stonewall Bar -- 28-30 N. 10th St., Allentown
Candida's -- 247 N. 12th St., Allentown
Hava Java Coffee Shop -- N. 19th St. Allentown
Dreamscape Comics -- 302 W. Broad St., Bethlehem
The Woods Campground
Red Star Saloon -- 11 S. 10th St, Reading
Sanctuary Counseling --515 Old Swede Road, Douglasville

Valley Gay Press is published 10 times a year monthly, excepting February and September. Deadlines are the 18th of the previous month. PDN's membership cycle begins in January. Circulation: 1000-2000 papers per issue. Readership: 3500, monthly, 35k readers a year.

To Contact Valley Gay Press:
Mail to:PO Box 22902 Lehigh Valley, PA 18002
Phone: 610-432-5449 Email:
info@padiversity.org
To arrange for your group or organization to receive copies to distribute, contact VGP. Some restrictions apply.

PDN
PENNSYLVANIA DIVERSITY NETWORK

MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name/s_____
Address_____
City_____State____zip_____
Phone_____ E-mail_____

- ☐ Senior dues (over 65) $5
- ☐ Individual dues $20
- ☐ Family dues $25

Please fill out this form and mail it with your check to PDN.
Make checks payable to **PDN.**

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LEHIGH VALLEY, PA 18002

BERKS COUNTY RESIDENTS MAIL TO:

PDN
PO BOX 242
MERTZTOWN, PA 19539

BECOME A MEMBER OF PA DIVERSITY NETWORK TO GET A SUBSCRIPTION TO THE VALLEY GAY PRESS

PLEASE PAY YOUR PA DIVERSITY NETWORK 2009 MEMBERSHIP DUES OF JUST $20 / $25

PLEASE SUPPORT PDN BY PAYING YOUR DUES NOW

Membership to PA Diversity Network, which brings you a subscription to the Valley Gay Press, is just $20 for an individual membership and $25 for a family membership.

PA Diversity Network is a not-for-profit volunteer driven organization which supports the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender community of the Greater Lehigh Valley and Berks County. PDN's projects include: The Valley Gay Press, The GLBT Infoline, the PDN Resource Web Site, the PDN Photo Project -- 300 Same-sex Couples and Rainbow Families. PDN also fights individual instances of discrimination on a case by case basis, does presentations to organizations, educational institutions and businesses on GLBT issues, and brings the community entertaining and fun activities like special concert events, art shows, community action opportunities, Bingo, and participation with other organizations.

PDN exists and functions financially in great part on contributions and memberships from people like you. Please become a 2009 member of PDN and further support PDN with a contribution. PDN is a 501(c)3 tax deductible organization.

TO PAY YOUR PDN DUES ON LINE!

JUST GO TO "MEMBERSHIP" AT WWW.PADIVERSITY.ORG IT'S EASY, IT'S SECURE.

CIRCULATE YOUR GROUP'S INFO

VGP is a free way for GLBTA friendly groups and organizations to get their information to hundreds of people in the Greater Lehigh Valley and Berks County. If you represent a pro-GLBT group or organization, or if you would like to start one, email PA Diversity Network (info@padiversity.org) or call the PDN offices at 610-432-5449 to find out how to list and circulate information about your group.

WHITEWATER RAFTING

MCCLV has planned a trip to go Whitewater Rafting on Sunday, June 14th. Surrounded by state park protected woodlands and mountains, you will enjoy 12 miles and 5 hours of Class III whitewater rafting, and outstanding scenery. This is a fun, thrilling, and pristine trip that everyone from ages 8 and up can do - no experience necessary.

While paddling over 17 rapids, you'll scream, laugh, swim, and have an excellent day. The price is $55.00/person. Bring a bagged lunch because the group will be stopping in the middle of the trip to eat. There will be plastic bins in each raft to hold everyone's lunch. Also bring a change of clothes as you will be getting drenched on this trip. This is a dam release weekend so its going to be wild and extremely fun. There will be a carpool leaving right after the church service at 12:15 pm sharp. MCCLV's reservation is for 1:30pm in Jim Thorpe.

RSVP to Stephanie Schaffer (20s30s@mcclv.org) Reservations and money are due no later than May 31. Come join the fun!!!! For more information, visit www.PoconoWhitewater.com.

CHECK OUT PA DIVERSITY'S WEBSITE AT WWW.PADIVERSITY.ORG

CHECK OUT PA DIVERSITY'S WEBSITE AT WWW.PADIVERSITY.ORG

TRISH'S COLUMN©

SEPARATE, NOT EQUAL, BUT PROGRESS NONE THE LESS

By Patricia Sullivan

On July 1st, Pennsylvania joins Alaska, Arizona, California, Connecticut, Illinois, Iowa, Maine, Montana, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont and Washington State in extending health benefits to domestic partners. The choice of plans and the rates for those plans are the same as for spouses of state workers. To qualify, a domestic partner must be at least 18 years old and provide documents that demonstrate at least 6 months of financial interdependence. The choices are:

1. A domestic partnership agreement as recognized by a governmental entity (A Civil Marriage Certificate is acceptable, but you must provide at least two of the following as well because of the Pennsylvania DOMA, "Opposite" married couples need only to provide a Civil Marriage Certificate).
2. A deed or lease evidencing common ownership of real property or a common leasehold interest in property
3. Evidence of joint title to a motor vehicle
4. A drivers license listing a common address
5. Proof of joint bank accounts or credit accounts
6. Proof of designation as a beneficiary for life insurance or retirement benefits or beneficiary designation in a will.
7. Assignment of durable power of attorney

Coverage is available for the domestic partner's children who reside in the household if a birth certificate is provided and employees who retire can continue coverage for domestic partners and dependents upon retirement.

The value of the benefits provided to the domestic partner is added to the employees taxable annual earnings. Federal and FICA taxes are then withheld by the IRS. For example, for calendar year 2009, the biweekly benefit for a couple with the least expensive family plan is $156.09 for medical benefits and $68.91 for supplemental benefits. That would be about $5850.00 additional annual income on which the employee will be taxed. Opposite married couples do not have to pay taxes on their health benefits because the Federal Government recognizes their marriages and exempts them from this tax. Interestingly, an employee who already has a family plan that includes their own child will not incur charges and there are no additional taxes if they add a domestic partner.

If your partnership ends, you must notify your employer within 60 days. A COBRA continuation of coverage will be sent to your former partner so they can elect coverage if needed.

Thankfully, our state workers now have this benefit. But it is increasingly clear that the piece meal approach to equality for same-sex domestic partners who are denied the ability to get a Civil Marriage is filled with inequities. Over the 21 years Liz and I have been partners we have paid close to $30,000 in Federal Taxes just based on our inability to file a joint return and on the imputed income from our domestic partner health benefits. This lack of equality becomes even more serious should one of us die. In that case, the survivor will have to pay Pennsylvania a 15% "stranger tax" on everything we jointly own. That could make the difference in whether the survivor could keep our home. Again, for opposite marriage partners this tax is deferred until the death of the surviving partner and then the estate is taxed. We incur lawyers fees for the preparation of and regular updating of wills, powers of attorney, and living wills, to attempt to validate our relationships. Families with children have the additional financial burden of expensive second parent adoption and parenting agreements. Despite all the legal maneuvering, short of legal Civil Marriage we are never guaranteed that the papers will be honored as we travel from even one institution to another, let alone one city or state to another.

LIZ OUT LOUD ©

By Liz Bradbury

THE DALLAS PRINCIPLES

Recently a group of 23 major GLBT activists met in Dallas, Texas to craft principles we could all follow to achieve equality for the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender community. The Dallas Principles (see below) are really a great and simple set of statements and guidelines that we as individuals or as organizations can all follow, (even if the organization is a 501c3). The Preamble is too long to include here. See it all at at www.padiversity.org. I encourage every person and group to adopt these principles. Read them. Understand them. And set personal and organizational goals to achieve them.

The DALLAS PRINCIPLES

1. Full civil rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender individuals must be enacted now. Delay and excuses are no longer acceptable.
2. We will not leave any part of our community behind.
3. Separate is never equal.
4. Religious beliefs are not a basis upon which to affirm or deny civil rights.
5. The establishment and guardianship of full civil rights is a non-partisan issue.
6. Individual involvement and grassroots action are paramount to success and must be encouraged.
7. Success is measured by the civil rights we all achieve, not by words, access or money raised.
8. Those who seek our support are expected to commit to these principles.

FULL CIVIL RIGHTS GOALS

1. DIGNITY AND EQUALITY. Every lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender person has inherent dignity and worth, and has the right to live free of discrimination and harassment.
2. FAMILY. Every LGBT person has the right to a family without legal barriers to immigration, civil marriage or raising children.
3. ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY. Every LGBT person has the right to economic opportunity free from discrimination in employment, public housing, accommodation, public facilities, credit, and federally funded programs and activities.
4. EDUCATION. Every LGBT child and youth has the right to an education that is affirming, inclusive and free from bullying.
5. NATIONAL SECURITY. Every LGBT person should have the opportunity to serve our country openly and equally in our military and foreign service.
6. CRIME. Every LGBT person should enjoy life protected against bias crimes.
7. HEALTH CARE. Every person should have access to affordable, high quality, and culturally competent health care without discrimination.

CALL TO ACTION

1. We demand that government officials act now to achieve full civil rights without delay.
2. Our organizations and individuals need to develop a collaborative and revolutionary new organizing model that mobilizes millions of supporters through emerging web and phone technologies.
3. All LGBT individuals must accept personal responsibility to do everything within their power for equality and should get involved in the movement by volunteering, giving and being out.
4. We will hold elected officials and our organizations accountable for being transparent and achieving full civil rights by active participation when possible and active opposition when necessary.
5. Our allies need to be proactive in public support for full civil rights.
6. Every government measure that quantifies the US citizenry must permit LGBT individuals to self-identify and be counted in every way citizens are counted.
7. We demand that the media present LGBT lives in fair, accurate and objective ways that neither include nor give credence to unsubstantiated, discriminatory claims and opinions.

POP QUIZ 12

1. Which of these states does not offer same-sex domestic partner benefits to its own state employees? A.IA B.OH C.CA. D. RI

2. What state just passed full domestic partnership, which will now not go into efect until anti-equality forces try to get enough signatures to over turn it?

3. Recently the Governor of __ stated that he would sign the marriage equality bill passed by the state house and the state senate with minor changes in the language.

4. Which US state is the most recent to pass marriage equality?

5. ___ just announced that gay soldiers could serve in its military. A. Uruguay B. Ecuador C. Brazil D. Cuba

6. ____ just passed civil unions.A. Croatia B. Russia C. Hungary D. Singapore

7. Which of these LV Corporations offers DP benefits for some employee's same-sex partners? A. PPL B. LV Hospital C. St. Luke's Hospital D.Air Products

8. Which of these Colleges does **not** offer same-sex partner benefits? A. Reading Area Community College B. Northampton Com. College C. Lehigh Carbon Com. College D. Kutztown U. E. Muhlenberg F. Moravian G. Lehigh U. H. Lafayette Univ

9. T&F The federal government has just announced DP benefits for same-sex partners of US Diplomats.

10. Which of these movie stars just announced that she is a Lesbian? A. Cameron Diaz B. Shelly Long C. Bette Midler D. Kelly McGillis

1B 2.WA 3.NH 4. ME or maybe NH depending om when you read this 5.A 6.C 7. A&B 8. A&C 9.T 10.D

QUOTE #1

"I have won the Democratic Primary for Pen Argyl Borough Tax Collector with 175 votes. I was unopposed. I believe that I have also secured the Republican Nomination with 10 write in votes. Please remember when you think of my victory - the Bible says more negative things about Tax Collectors than gay people. So I may be doomed to eternal damnation."
-- Steve Black, Pen Argyl Borough Tax Collector.

QUOTE #2

"Last night Dan (Anders) won a resounding victory in his race for a full term on the Philadelphia Court of Common Pleas. Dan overcame poor ballot position to convincingly win this election."-- **Jeffrey Scott, Friends of Dan Anders**

QUOTE #3

"You know, on those types of things I'm very supportive. When it comes to marriage, I think that civil rights need to be for all." **-- Marie Osmond, who has an out Lesbian daughter**

We believe it would improve the quality of life in the Lehigh Valley & Berks County if all people were equally protected from unfair discrimination based upon actual or perceived: race, color, religion, national origin,ancestry or place of birth, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, family status, age, disability, or use of a guide animal, in the areas of employment, housing, and public accommodation.

PA Diversity Network
GLBT Infoline
PA-GALA
Rainbow Families
Valley Gay Press
Allentown Human Relations Commission
Safe-Space of Lehigh University
PFLAG Lehigh Valley
ACCO - A Chorus Celebrating Women
GLORA
Pride of the GLV
LV Gay Men's Chorus
NCC GLBT Student Union
The Lehigh Valley Labor Party
EQUAL! at Agere
Metropolitan Community Church LV
OutThere - Cedar Crest
9th Street Shelter Allentown
LV Community Action Committee
GLEE at Air Products
FACT
AIDS Outreach
The Unitarian Universalist Church LV
GLOSS
LEPOCO
GLISN of [illegible] & Bradstreet
AIDS Services Center
Theatre Outlet
Integrity - Bethlehem
The Lehigh Valley Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)
Civic Theater 19th Street Theatre
The Latin Alliance
The Enigma Players
New Covenant Family Ministries
Properties of Merit
Allentown City Democratic Committee
Episcopal Diocese of Bethlehem
Puerto Rican Cultural Alliance
[illegible] Turning Point
Muhlenberg Theater Association
LV Crime Victims Council Touchstone Theater
Congregation Am Haskalah
LV Progressive Students' Alliance
The Consistory of St. Peter's UCC - Allentown
United Friends School Quakertown
LV Transsexual Coalition
Lehigh Valley Transmen
Old Allentown Preservation Association
The Center for Animal Health and Welfare
WDIY
All Souls Ecumenical Church in Reading

PHOTO OF THE MONTH
EQUALITY MARCH IN PHILADELPHIA

1000s marched in Philadelphia in the steps of the gay pioneers first march in 1964. PDN, MCCLV, Reading Pride, Sanctuary Counseling, Bucks Com.Col GSA, were there. See a huge phoro album at www.padiversity.org.

PENNSYLVANIA DIVERSITY NETWORK THANKS THE UNITED WAY AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS IN THE UNITED WAY CAMPAIGN WHO CHOSE PDN FOR THEIR DESIGNATED CONTRIBUTIONS!!!

PDN STARTS NEW YOUTH INITIATIVE PROGRAM TO FUND GLBT YOUTH GROUP PRO-EQUALITY EFFORTS

READ HOW YOUR GROUP CAN GET FUNDING ON PAGE 5.

VALLEY GAY PRESS BOOK REVIEW

REVIEW BY A'JA LYONS

'THE GOD BOX' BY ALEX SANCHEZ

LAMBDA award winner Alex Sanchez, author of 'The Rainbow Boys' trilogy and 'So Hard to Say', has written an amazing novel using the unspoken voice of teens living in the Bible Belt. Sanchez's novel 'The God Box' is about teenaged Pablo, who Anglicizes his name to Paul. Paul is a Mexican immigrant whose family moves to a small suburban community outside of Dallas, Texas. Paul is a proud practicing Christian, whose life revolves around his school's 'Christ on Campus Bible Club' and Christian Rock music. Paul has a loving girlfriend and a tight-knit group of friends, but secretly has elaborate thoughts and sex dreams about being intimate with men. Paul feels a deep shame about his desires. He tries to dismiss them as though they're just a phase, until a new boy from Dallas enrolls in his school and shows him that out, loud, and proud is not a one way ticket to hell.

Being born and bred in the backwoods of the great state of Texas, this reviewer has had Christianity shoved down her throat since birth. Like Paul, when puberty hit and those feelings came flooding in, I tried to ignore my feelings for women and focus on becoming a better Christian. I was too young and naïve to see that being true to myself, and with others, was the better way to live my life.

'The God Box' is the perfect novel for gays of faith or anyone questioning their small town upbringing.

CHECK OUT PA DIVERSITY NETWORK'S WEBSITE AT WWW.PADIVERSITY.ORG